

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 IO-10 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01 EB-07

AID-05 /097 W

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R 150840Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9902

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 2689

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR ASEAN XC MY

SUBJ: ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING: PROGRESS REPORT

REF: A) KL 2660 B) KL 2669

1. SUMMARY: CLOSED DOOR MEETINGS OF ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS MAY 14 HAVE APPARENTLY RESULTED IN GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TREATY OF AMITY AND COOPERATION AND ON INCREASED INFORMAL MILITARY AND SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS. ALSO, THERE PROSPECTS FOR ASEAN COOPERATION IN NARCOTICS CONTROL. END SUMMARY.

2. ASEAN FONMINS MET IN CLOSED DOOR SESSION WITH PM RAZAK (ALSO GOM FONMIN) MORNING MAY 14 AND IN CLOSED SESSIONS UNDER CHAIRMAN OF GOM INFORMATION AND SPECIAL FUNCTIONS
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(FOREIGN AFFAIRS) MINISTER TENGKU RITHAUDDEEN. AFTER

90-MINUTE MEETING WITH RAZAK, STATEMENT WAS ISSUED THAT FONMINS DISCUSSED POLITICAL SITUATION IN SEASIA; RITHAUDDEEN ALSO TOLD NEWSMEN THAT PROBLEMS OF VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN REFUGEES, MIDDLE EAST SITUATION AND INDOCHINA DEVELOPMENTS WERE DISCUSSED DURING COURSE OF DAY. PRESS REPORTS MAY 15 QUOTED INFORMED SOURCES THAT FONMINS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO TREATY OF AMITY AND COOPERATION, BUT DRAFT TREATY WILL BE REFERRED TO GOVERNMENTS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION. ALSO, PRESS REPORTS SAID AGREEMENT ON "SEARCH AND RESCUE OF SHIPS IN DISTRESS" WILL BE SIGNED TODAY (MAY 15) AND THAT COMMITTEES ARE WORKING ON DRAFTS OF FINAL PRESS STATEMENT AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE. FONMINS REPORTEDLY APPROVED 80 LARGELY ECONOMIC COOPERATION PROJECTS AND FORMALLY ACCEPTED OFFERS OF CANADIAN, NEW ZEALAND AND FURTHER AUSTRALIAN AID. ONE PROJECT APPROVED PERTAINS TO NARCOTICS CONTROL, BUT DETAILS NOT YET AVAILABLE. PRESS SOURCES INDICATE FONMINS FINALIZED STRUCTURE OF ASEAN SECRETARIAT IN JAKARTA BUT WERE NOT ABLE TO AGREE ON APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY-GENERAL; GOP REPORTEDLY IS STILL "CLAIMING" POST BUT MALAYSIANS IN PARTICULAR WILL NOT AGREE TO FILIPINO, THUS POST WILL PROBABLY FALL TO NON-CONTROVERSIAL INDONESIAN CANDIDATE FOR FIRST TWO YEARS.

3. ON TREATY OF AMITY AND COOPERATION, FONMINS REPORTEDLY REACHED BROAD AGREEMENT ON DESIRABILITY OF PACT (LEAVING DOOR OPEN FOR OTHER SEASIAN NATIONS, ESPECIALLY INDOCHINESE STATES, TO ACCEDE LATER ON) BUT CONTENTIOUS CLAUSES PERTAINING TO RESOLUTION OF INTRA-ASEAN DISPUTES AND SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO NON-AGGRESSION WERE DELETED FROM DRAFT (SEE ALSO FBIS BANGKOK 141540Z MAY 1975). ACCORDING PRESS SOURCES AND ADVISERS TO PHILIPPINE AND INDONESIAN DELEGATIONS, THERE IS ALSO GENERAL AGREEMENT ON NEED FOR INCREASED MILITARY/SECURITY COOPERATION BUT, LARGELY DUE TO INSISTENCE OF MALAYSIANS, SUCH AGREEMENTS ARE TO BE "INFORMAL AND FLEXIBLE." IN THIS WAY, ACCORDING TO THESE CONTACTS, IMPRESSION IS AVOIDED THAT ASEAN IS A MILITARY PACT DIRECTED EITHER AT INDOCHINA OR AT POWERS OUTSIDE

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THE REGION. IT POSSIBLE THIS INCREASED COOPERATION WILL TAKE FORM OF EXPANDED INTELLIGENCE EXCHANGES, DISCUSSIONS OF AIR DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS AND CAPABILITIES, AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT HARMONIZATION, ESPECIALLY RELATING TO COMMUNICATIONS AND AIR DEFENSE. FONMINS ALSO EXPECTED TO APPROVE IMS PROPOSAL FOR JOINT NAVAL PATROLLING OF SOUTH CHINA SEA (REF B AND KL 2596) BUT THIS TRILATERAL COOPERATION WILL NOT BE FORMALLY ESPOUSED BY ASEAN.

4. LOCAL PRESS MAY 14 AND 15 HAS BEEN PREDICTABLY EFFUSIVE IN PRAISE OF FONMINS' OPENING STATEMENTS (REF A), TAKING GENERAL LINE THAT ASEAN HAS NOW "COME INTO ITS OWN" AS A REGIONAL ORGANIZATION. MALAY-LANGUAGE "UTUSAN MALAYSIA" (UM) MAY 15 AVERRED THAT ASEAN NATIONS HAVE COLLECTIVE STRENGTH AND RESOURCES TO AID INDOCHINA RECONSTRUCTION. UM ALSO SAID COOPERATION AMONG ASIAN NATIONS IS PREFERABLE TO AID "FROM FAR DISTANT FOREIGN POWERS" AND, ON POLITICAL LEVELS, ASEAN CONCEPT OF NEUTRALITY CAN FILL VOID CREATED BY AMERICAN WITHDRAWAL. IN SOMEWHAT SAME VEIN, MALAY-LANGUAGE "BERITA HARIAN" MAY 15 SAID THAT FRIENDSHIP WITH INDOCHINA CANNOT BE ACHIEVED BY ONE SIDE ONLY AND, WITHOUT SPECIFICALLY SAYING SO, ECHOED SINGAPORE FONMIN RAJARATNAM THAT NEW SAIGON AND PHNOM PENH REGIMES SHOULD EXTEND HANDS OF FRIENDSHIP TO ASEAN ALSO (PARA 6 REF A). ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PENANG "STRAITS ECHO" MAY 13 SAID ASEAN WILL NEED TO "WOO THE INDOCHINA STATES INTO A CONSTRUCTIVE PARTNERSHIP, BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN THEY SHOULD BE INVITED TO JOIN ASEAN." "ECHO" CONTINUED: "THEY WOULD MOST PROBABLY NOT WANT TO IN THE FIRST INSTANCE. A LARGER GROUPING WOULD COME WHEN THEY ARE MADE TO FEEL THAT THEY ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND HAVE AN INDISPENSABLE ROLE TO PLAY IN PROMOTING REGIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY IN NEUTRALITY."

5. COMMENT: ON POLITICAL-MILITARY MATTERS, ASEAN FONMINS SEEM TO BE EDGING TOWARD MORE CONCRETE FORMS OF COOPERATION WITHOUT CALLING A SPADE A SPADE. FULL OR SUBSTANTIALLY ENHANCED COOPERATION, HOWEVER, IS STILL RETARDED BY TRADITIONAL SUSPICIONS -- ESPECIALLY MALAYSIAN-PHILIPPINE ANTAGONISMS OVER THE SOUTHERN

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PHILIPPINE MUSLIM REBELLION -- THAT HAVE, FOR EXAMPLE, IMPEDED PROGRESS ON PROPOSALS FOR SETTLEMENT OF INTRA-ASEAN DISPUTES. IT APPEARS ONCE AGAIN THAT ASEAN FONMINS ARE WILLING TO SETTLE FOR SERIES OF HALF-MEASURES WHILE PROJECTING AURA OF MUTUAL GOOD FEELINGS, INTER ALIA BY CONCLUSION OF TREATY OF AMITY AND COOPERATION.

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